



Maricopa Integrated Healthcare Home (IHH) Project

Tuesday, August 2, 2011
Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Thank you.

And, good morning, everyone!

I'm very pleased to be with you this morning to be able to talk about something that has been a part of my personal mission for decades.

If you know ANYTHING about Jan Brewer, you know that when I speak about improving the system ...

-- I'm talking about improving the lives of those who are in the system ...

-- Helping families who have to deal with its complications on a daily basis ...

– And, you know I am speaking from the heart.

These are not just empty words – spoken for some political advantage.

I'm saying what I mean -- what I believe -- what I feel – and, what I know is true.

You and I both know policy changes are needed to overcome some very real problems, and we DO have some successes in Arizona to build upon – and we're tackling these problems head-on.

When I became Governor, I began discussions with the Legislature and stakeholders about the need to integrate behavioral health services and acute care two years ago.

-- Those meetings spurred significant discussions about integration within our community -- and we've seen a lot of movement toward clinical integration -- our gathering here today is a great example of that.

Bringing acute care and behavioral health services together will ensure that SMI patients get the care they need.

To help make this approach a reality, Arizona received a grant from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to plan for developing integrated health homes for persons with Serious Mental Illness.

AHCCCS and the Department of Health Services are working together on this project which includes planning for a fully integrated system -- including a specialty Regional Behavioral Health Authority with SMI health homes.

As we move forward, your guidance is vital.

YOU are the people who know what needs to be done.

With YOUR help, Arizona can be one of the first states to effectively integrate care for people with SMI.

DHS will be meeting with stakeholders in the coming months to further develop our plans for integrated health homes for SMI patients administered through a specialty RBHA.

And, let's face it, we're headed in the right direction -- on MANY fronts.

ONE example -- the reason we're here today -- is the partnership between MIHS and Magellan, bringing together 20 SMI clinics across Maricopa County -- and 13 MIHS Community Health Centers.

-- This is in addition to behavioral health and physical health inpatient and specialty services -- all coming together to create a comprehensive healthcare network.

Primary care providers will be available to meet SMI consumers at the behavioral health care site; co-located so the site will be the entry point for care and serve as the health home.

I applaud the fact that a whole person approach to healthcare will be used -- including prevention – screening -- early intervention -- and that acute care needs will all be addressed for both physical health and behavioral health.

I also applaud the fact that this partnership is based on a shared governance and accountability structure.

In addition, shared electronic medical records will support communication and allow real-time consultation and access to medical records.

So, again, thanks to Magellan and MIHS for coming together in this worthwhile partnership.

It's a partnership that reduces utilization of inpatient hospitalization, reduces use of behavioral health crisis services and reduces illness burden associated with preventable chronic conditions.

And most importantly, it will improve the quality of care for patients with SMI.

Having said all of that, I want to emphasize that I believe that this is one of MANY ways to explore integration.

I look forward to turning to private sector health care experts -- and their leadership -- and innovation -- to advance quality care – and to help us REDUCE COSTS – including ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS.

Quite frankly, isn't it time we stop letting the courts dictate care standards?

As I mentioned, I believe there are many “right” tracks leading to where we want to be.

And, certainly one of them is the announcement of this Maricopa Integrated Healthcare Home Project ... with partners ...

-- Magellan Health Services of Arizona,

-- Choices,

-- Partners in Recovery,

-- People of Color Network,

-- and Southwest Network.

I thank ALL of these partners for coming together -- in such solid cooperation that enhances care for some of society's most VULNERABLE PEOPLE.

And, thank you, again, for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you -- from the heart -- about them.

Thank you.